

REPORT NO

CD NO.

25X1A

DATE DISTR. 11 FEB 52

NO. OF PAGES 2

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1X

In northwest Poland nearly all cattle raised were small dairy cattle. The most popular breed was the Rasa Fryzyska - or Hollander - a black-and-white dairy breed imported from the Netherlands. In the region of the Carpathian mountains mostly Sementaler dairy cattle from Switzerland are found. This is true especially of eastern Silesia. In eastern Galicia, Sementaler and Polish Red-beef cattle are found. In the area around Lublin, Polish Red cattle predominate. The northeast corner has a variety of breeds including Polish Red, Hollander, and some Holsteins. In the smaller communities of central and eastern Poland cross-breeding is quite prevalent. Pure breeds are more common to western Poland. The hybrid animals give less milk but are better able to resist disease, especially tuberculosis. The central plains area has both Polish Red and Hollanders. Of all the pure breeds, the Polish Red withstands disease the best but are smaller and give less milk.

In the rural areas each village does its own slaughtering and usually consumes most of the resulting products locally. The larger herds send their slaughter beef to the larger cities by rail. Normally private veterinarians are commissioned by the government to be part-time meat inspectors. The town of Gabia (population area - six thousand, 52°20'N, 19°40'E) normally had about 20 thousand head of cattle in the poviat surrounding it (poviat Gostynin). Most of the cattle were Hollanders but quite a few were Simentalen. At the village of Stawiszyn (population - two thousand) in poviat Kalisz (51°55'N, 18°06'E) the stockyards slaughtered eight or ten cattle per week and about 50 hogs. There were about 50 - 60 thousand cattle in this entire poviat - mostly Hollander and Polish Red. Some large dairy herds of one hundred to five hundred head are to be found normally in this area. Rambouget and Merino sheep are found in this poviat.

Pure bred dairy cattle such as the Hollanders and the Semantalers are the most susceptible to all types of endemic and epidemic diseases. Therefore, although hoof and mouth disease occurs all over Poland, it is most prevalent in the

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western dairy area. The country's most serious epidemic of this disease occurred in Poland in 1937 and 1938. During 1936 the disease was carried from North Africa into France by infected sheep. From France it progressed eastward into Poland. It is interesting to note that although strict border controls were imposed long before the disease reached Poland, the infection spread rapidly. It was discovered that the disease germs were carried by birds flying from Germany. The "passage" of the disease over such distances and such a period of time weakened the potency of the germs and lessened the effects of the plague.

The disease existed in five distinct types, known as A, B, C, D, and O. Type A is the most severe and also the rarest in Poland. The plague of 1937-1938 was of the type O germ which is about medium in severity. Cattle surviving one type of germ are still susceptible to the other types and are immune to the original type for only two years.

The treatment of hoof and mouth disease proceeded without the use of serum. When cattle became infected, both farmers and privately-practicing veterinarians were required by law to call in a government veterinarian. When the disease was diagnosed, the entire herd was quarantined and infected with the disease. This was usually done by placing a cloth in the mouth of an infected animal and transferring it to the mouths of others. In this manner the entire herd would come down with the disease but with a lighter case than if exposed in the normal way. The quarantine would be in effect for one month or longer, with possibly one or two deaths out of 25 - 30 head. In the area around Rippin, two hundred cattle died of hoof and mouth disease in two months. Even during epidemics the meat from infected cattle would be sold to the public unless abscessed.

4. Other Diseases

- (A) During World War I the Russians brought in a new cattle disease known to us only as Pestus bevm. All cattle were equally susceptible to this. It struck in isolated spots in far eastern Poland, killing whole herds in two days. The meat of the infected animals was fatal to humans; hence, its sale was stopped.
- (B) Erysiphilis (rozycza swin) infected hogs. A vaccine was used successfully against it in most areas.
- (C) Anthrax or "Waglik" was strongest in Galicia. A Russian vaccine was used with moderate success.
- (D) Hog Cholera or "pest" was fairly well controlled by a serum manufactured at the Klawe laboratory in Warsaw. The serum was called something like "surowica poserow pomorowa".
- (E) Tuberculosis existed in the cattle herds of the west mostly, sometimes infecting 50% - 70% of the pure bred dairy herds.
- (F) Bang's disease also prevailed in the west part of the country.
- (G) Pleurepneumonia contagiosa bovm or bronchial pneumonia, is a virus disease which broke out in 1933 and 1935. It had a high mortality rate, wiping out whole herds when it struck. Two thousand cattle died in one poviat in a short time. The meat was sold for human consumption, except for the organs.

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